

## Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4384

C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 4940

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OEXC, GR, ELAB

SUBJECT: FY76 IV PROGRAM-LEADER GRANTEE NOMINEES

REF: (A) STATE 113357, (B) ATHENS 3751

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1. IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUEST CONTAINED REFTEL, THE FOLLOWING BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION IS PROVIDED FOR IV PROGRAM NOMINEES CHRISTOS KARAKITSOS AND NICHOLAOS PAPAGEORGIOU. ASSUMING DEPARTMENT HAS NO OBJECTION, THE EMBASSY NOW WISHES TO NOMINATE PAPAGEORGIOU AS ITS PRIMARY CANDIDATE AND KARAKITSOS AS THE ALTERNATE CANDIDATE (THUS REFERSING THE ORDER CITED IN REFTEL B).

2. NICHOLAOS PAPAGEORGIOU . (A) PAPAGEORGIOU IS CURRENTLY PRESIDENT OF THE GE ERAL CONFEDERATION OF GREEK WORKERS (GSEE). AS GSEE PRESIDENT, HE IS THE TOP ELCTED LABOR OFFICIAL IN GREECE. (B) PAPAGEORGIOU WAS BORN IN 1919 IN THE AREA OF KARDITSA. HE GRADUATED FROM HIGH SCHOOL IN ATHENS IN 1938 AND SUBSEQUENTLY COMPLETED TWO YEARS AT ATHENS UNIVERSITY MEDICAL SCHOOL. BECAUSE OF ECONOMIC DIFFI- CULTIES IN HIS FAMILY - AND BECASE OF THE GERMAN OCCUPATION OF GREECE - HE WAS OBLIGED TO TERMINATE HIS MEDICAL EDUCATION EARLY. HE APRTICIPATED IN THE ALBANIAN CAMPAIGN IN THE EARLY DAYS OF WORLD WAR II AND DURING THE GERMAN OCCUPATION OF GREECE WAS A MEMBER OF THE GREEK NATIONALIST FORCES UNDER THE COMMAND OF GENERAL ZERVAS. CONFIDENTIAL

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SIMILARLY, HE SERVED IN THE GREEK ARMY FROM

1945-48 FURING THE GREEK CIVIL WAR. IN 1948 HE ENROLLED IN THE PANTEIOS SCHOOL OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND ATTENDED COURSES THERE FOR TWO YEARS.

(C) IN THE LATE 1940'S HE BECAME AN EMPLOYEE OF THE HERCULES CEMENT CORPORATION AND SOON BECAME INVOLVED WITHIN THE CEMENT INDUSTRY AS A LABOR OFFICIAL. IN 1954 HE BECAME PRESIDENT OF THE ASSOCIATION OF THE CEMENT INDUSTRY EMPLOYEES OF GREECE AND IN 1964 BECAME PRESIDENT OF THE CEMENT WORKERS FEDERATION. IN THE SAME YEAR, HE WAS APPOINTED A MEMBER OF THE TEMPORARY ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL OF THE GSEE AND WAS SUBSEQUENTLY ELECTED BY THE MEMBERSHIP OF THAT COUNCIL AS SECRETARY GENERAL. IN APRIL 1967 HE WAS OUSTED FROM HIS TRADE UNION POSITION BY THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT OF GREECE. SHORTLY THEREAFTER, HE HELPED FOUND THE CLANDESTINE LABOR FEDERATION DEKE (GREEK DEMOCRATIC WORKERS MOVEMENT) IN COLLABORATION WITH COSTAS LASKARIS (NOW MINISTER OF LABOR), CHRISTOS KARAKITSOS (GSEE SECRETARY GENERAL) AND A FEW OTHERS. WITH THE RETURN OF CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT TO GREECE IN 1974, HE WAS APPOINTED LATER THAT YEAR TO THE TEMPORARY ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL OF THE GSEE AND SUBSEQUENTLY AS ITS PRESIDENT. AT THE GSEE CONGRESS HELD IN KAVALA IN APRIL OF THIS YEAR HE WAS ELECTED TO THE GSEE ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL AND ON APRIL 17 WAS ELECTED AS PRESIDENT OF THE GSEE.

(D) HE DOES NOT SPEAK ENGLISH.

3. CHRISTOS KARAKITSOS. (A) KARAKITSOS IS CURRENTLY SERVING BOTH AS SECRETARY GENERAL OF GREECE'S TOP LABOR CONFEDERATION, THE GENERAL CONFEDERATION OF GREEK WORKERS (GSEE), AS WELL AS PRESIDENT OF THE ATHENS LABOR CENTER. HE WAS ELECTED TO THE FORMER POST APRIL 17, 1976, AND TO THE LATTER POST IN JANUARY OF THIS YEAR.

(B) KARAKITSOS WAS BORN IN ATHENS IN 1927. HE GRADUATED FROM THE EXPERIMENTAL HIGH SCHOOL OF ATHENS UNIVERSITY IN 1948 AND SUBSEQUENTLY STUDIED FOR THREE YEARS IN THE MEDICAL SCHOOL OF ATHENS UNIVERSITY. IN 1955 HE BECAME A SALARIED EMPLOYEE OF THE AUXILIARY INSURANCE FUND OF CONSTRUCTION WORKERS AND CONTINUED IN THAT CAPACITY UNTIL APRIL 21, 1976. FROM 1956 UNTIL 1976 HE SERVED AS PRESIDENT

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OF THE ASSOCIATION OF EMPLOYEES OF THE CONSTRUCTION WORKERS AUXILIARY INSURANCE FUND AND FOR THE PERIOD 1963 TO 1967 HE ALSO SERVED AS PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERATION OF EMPLOYEES OF THE SOCIAL INSURANCE ORGANIZATIONS OF GREECE. IN THE PERIOD 1964-65 HE SERVED AS A MEMBER OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL OF THE GSEE. IN 1967 HE WAS PROPOSED AS A CANDIDATE FOR PARLIAMENT ON THE TICKET OF THE CENTER UNION PARTY (THEN HEADED BY GEORGE PAPANDREOU).

THAT PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION--SCHEDULED FOR MAY--WAS NOT HELD DUE TO THE MILITARY COUP IN APRIL 1967.

(C) IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE COUP KARAKITSOS WAS DISMISSED FROM HIS OFFICIAL LABOR RELATED POSITIONS. HE THEN COLLABORATED WITH CONSTANTINE LASKARIS (CURRENTLY MINISTER OF LABOR) AND NICHOLAOS PAPAGEORGIOU (CURRENTLY PRESIDENT OF THE GSEE) TO FOUND A CLANDESTINE LABOR FRONT CALLED THE DEMOCRATIC GREEK LABOR MOVEMENT WHICH IS MORE FAMILIARLY KNOWN BY ITS INTIALS DEKE.

(D) HE DOES NOT SPEAK ENGLISH. END LIMITED OFFICIAL USE.

4. COMMENT: (BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL) THE EMBASSY BELEIVES THAT THIS IS AN EXCELLENT TIME TO DEMONSTRATE U.S. SUPPORT FOR A DEMOCRATIC AND FREE LABOR MOVEMENT IN GREECE BY SENDING A LEADING GREEK TRADE UNION OFFICIAL TO THE U.S. UNDER THE IVP. THE GREEK LABOR MOVEMENT HAS JUST EMERGED FROM A LONG PERIOD OF ANOMALY AND NOW FOR THE FIRST TIME IN NINE YEARS HAS FREELY ELECTED OFFICIALS GOVERNING THE AFFAIRS OF THE NATION'S LABOR ORGANIZATIONS. THESE OFFICIALS FACE CONSIDERABLE DIFFICULTIES, NTO LEAST OF WHICH IS THE CHALLENGE FROM THE COMMUNISTS TO INCREASE THEIR INFLUENCE AND ROLE IN THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT. THUS, IT WOULD BE MOST USEFUL TO EXPOSE ONE OF THE TOP LEADERS OF GREECE'S CHIEF CONFEDERATION TO THE U.S. LABOR SCENE AND GIVE HIM THE OPPORTUNITY TO HAVE DISCUSSIONS WITH AMERICAN OFFICIALS DEALING WITH LABOR AFFAIRS, BITH IN GOVERNMENT AND IN OUR TRADE UNIONS. ALL SECTORS OF GREEK SOCIETY MUST CONTRIBUTE IN THE EFFORT TO CREATE AND SUSTAIN A FIRM BASE FOR DEMOCRACY HERE, AND THE LABOR SECTOR CAN PLAY A KEY ROLE IN THIS REGARD. INTEREST SHOWN THEIR TOP LEADERSHIP NOW BY THEIR U.S. COUNTERPARTS CAN SERVE TO STRENGTHEN EVEN MORE THESE LEADERS' COMMITMENT TO DEMOCRATIC TRADE UNIONISM. THE EFFECT ON THEM--AND THROUGH THEM TO THE LABOR SECTOR  
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GENERALLY--WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO THE PROMOTION OF U.S. INTERESTS IN GREECE AND TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF OUR RELATIONS.  
END CONFIDENTIAL.  
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